

Guises

A Chainsong for the Muse
By

Ronald H. Bayes

GUISES: A CHAINSONG FOR THE MUSE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Poetry

Cages and Journeys
Child Outside My Window
Constructions in English and Japanese
Dust and Desire
History of the Turtle I–IV
The Casketmaker
Porpoise I–IV
Tokyo Annex I–IV
Fram I–IV
King of August
A Beast In View

Prose

John Reed and the Limits of Idealism
The Plays of Yukio Mishima

For the Stage

An Evening with Ezra Pound
An Evening with William Carlos Williams

GUISES: A CHAINSONG FOR THE MUSE



New
& Selected
Poems
1970-1990

by Ronald H. Bayes

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To
Mary de Rachewiltz



*Sometime this world was so stedfast and stable
That mannes word was obligacioun...*

—Chaucer

*Bring us in no puddings for therein is all goats' blood,
Nor bring us in no venison for that is not for our good;
But bring us in good ale.*

—Anonymous

*Hymself drank water of the well,
As dide the knyght sire Percyvell
So worthy under wede,
Til on a day—*

—Chaucer, Sir Thopas

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I
New Poems

-To Carolyn Kizer

LAURINBURG LITANY

—To Jon Johnson

BOARDING MUSIC: fits 1 - 36

*O give me the comfort of thy help again,
and stablish me with thy free Spirit*

—Psalm 51

1.

Sweet Mabel, Sweet Marmalade,
brisk bath, everybody towel down and
count down.

2.

The body
stripped of its
self-accusations,
an end
in itself.

So therefore must I
declare my license
renewed!

3.

Troy
New York

4.

Tired of being your jester
and uncaring how old and helpless you are
how young and beautiful you are
how intelligent and insightful you are
how dumb and needful you are
how dishwater is the message you send or
how electric is the sex you hint at, I

am
flat
assed
tired of being
eternally distributed.
Right now!

5.

O yes, yez, yez
that particular one lover
laughs and laughs over
years.
That's God.

6.

Piano, piano!

7.

And Mae West said in Philadelphia,
“We will unzip no fly
before it’s time.”
And W. C. Fields said in Hollywood,
“Man’s gotta believe in something.
I believe I’ll have another drink.”

8.

And Suzy had a great beat
w/ one stick
as only a country woman
can beat
crying “more, more” beating
the vegetable can.

9.

Having once played snare drum in
the Umapine High School Band he acknowledged
a secret empathy.

10.

And Danny said,
“The light is red, so we’d
better run.”

11.

How could he breathe?
“It doesn’t matter
if he ends up in the pen.”

(Alligator, alligator, when you sleep
do you snore?)

12.

And Teresa insisted
“I’m finding the duck
whether you enjoy it
or not.”
I screamed.
It was all about
all about
St. George,
right?

13.

St. Paul asked: “What were they like
in the Salton Sea?”
St. Andrew said: “I dunno—all you ever
saw
was the head.”
St. Thomas: “Strong jaws?”
St. Andrew: “Nessie-sary?”
St. Pete: “I do not like the tone of this
punning, you Scots creep! This ain’t funny.”

14.

Mew, mew, mew,
Mewmewmew.

15.

Usually I could bet on you
and
my insurance
agent
and my
Masonic lodge, but
this year
somehow they
did not renew greetings.
...just you. WOW!

16.

A Hindu named Ghandi.
An agnostic name Hammarskjold.
A Unitarian named Stevenson.
A Confucian named Pound.
A Shintoist who named himself Mishima.
A Muslim named Anwar Sadat.

17.

This is not new.
Not to seek rich.
Not to forsake rich.
Do what is required
by the light of conscience.

18.

Somebody said
“Go back.”
Somebody at the border, fast,
said
“Do it fast and look to the right.”

And the slick silvathin ad dude said
at midnight in Beirut
“My cousin is Sirhan Sirhan, Mr. Bayes.
What do you think of that?”

19.

I was trying to talk about Columbus and
sober up
while Howard moped on New Year's day and said,
"Only cherry I ever had was in a cocktail."
And Marie said, "That is tough hangnails in
your omelette, Howard."

20.

Tygers pounce
and lambs young screw.
Did He who made them both make you?

21.

Hello,
My fancy!

22.

Boogie
boogie
oak tree
oak tree
see that Nun
reading, son,
to a disco beat
on Thursday?

23.

The Three being there
was a *splendid* surprise!

24.

It is not just to the swift,
nor in midsummer.
The cry is as interred as a call
for a committee meeting, if you
are so lucky.

25.

Boarding music!
Boarding music!
Booarding music,
please.

26.

And J. Patton ended his reading and
turned to the audience said flatly
“If you want to know about death and
night and blood, ask Ron Bayes.”

27.

Death
and night
and blood.
I wish I could be clear.

28.

I would kill myself to keep
you from going to war.
I hope you would insist...

29.

In her eyes
curiosity—
but no pain.

30.

Beauty, hard, cold and hurtful. Sunday
again. Lonely sun worse than rain.

31.

Barely
the comfortable
side of panic.

32.

When nothing tastes good
from the mouth, send out
cussing as prayer.
It will have to do.

33.

"It's the *other* one."

34.

Perhaps you will come in here through that
far door
(the very last my heart leapt for),
dispel sandwaste and tedium:
perhaps you will come to me through that door
—right there, radiant and bare.

34.

O I was ever pooled where you fished.
And whatever is that pasted smackamiddle
of your breast-bone?

35.

Back
wrack.

36.

"You look like Him,"
you said and kept repeating.
I played along. Was it a putdown?
I'm fast as cats on that chord.
We made love anyway. "You do
look like Him," you said.
I figured I was wrong
again.
"I am," I said.

ZOROASTER: fits 37 - 55

37.

The sky turned red.

38.

Well

maybe it is all a wrestling match
and there is more to be twigged
at the temple of Blackjack Mulligan
and Rick Flair, Johnny Weaver and
Ricky Steamboat and The Minnesota
Wrecking Crew than of many a Sunday service.

"No good deed goes unpunished," as Evelyn said.
Neither do bad deeds.

And if God wears his keys on the left side
it is probably just half the time.

"Let us sum up: we are exploited on a
cosmic scale," the man said.

&

"To be vast is good. To be infinite is
too much."

...As if sucking the naval of the sky
—Jacques Lacarriere

All matter is doomed. Hence, Cancer.

And death speeds toward each.

The bull and the swan become one,
but you will see in the arena
only one
welded swan.

39.

What are the aspects of
fairness and unfairness?

“You know
he doesn’t mean it
but by God
does he ever go on
until he is his own
broken instrument.”

And on:

a bad voice *and*
a bad violin.

That’s him in the love pit
pit.

40.

“Work it up...” song lyric.

No,
Stumble son
God’s laugh
by God! as

We are sucked
into absences.

41.

The little stick bones
of Arab children
in the rubble in the garbage
while we coddled both
Begin the Butcher
and Islamic Jihad.
And Jewish children and
Sud Amerika this round.

Vide the Gnostic hymn:
“I have lived in this world of dark
for more years than you can count and
no one ever knew that I was there.”

And no one knows now.

42.

And the Orthodoxers
all
and everywhere
screw and whine on for breeding rights
breed em don't worry about feed em
(Robertson for President... of India?).
Dryland ranchers do not do that, know
how many cows to the acre or how many
acres to the cow are NECESSARY.

43.

I see the boys of summer
in their ruin
though at the time I envied them
their screwin.

44.

And I said, spotting Senator Williams,
“How is The General?”
And he, a bit startled, “Better, much better.
He will run.”

45.

I remained typing
in the dark.

46.

Honey, you streak across the frame
like a zig-zag hustler.
I love it.

47.

2-day growth of crazy.
“Ignorant thief!”

48.

Money and funerals.

49.

“I’m next! Room for one more!!”

50.

The “I love you” cry
rises.
And the chorus of “YES!”
We must! We must!
“Who are you?”

51.

Goin back to Dixie.
Donzoko. The Idiot. Gallipoli.
Goin back to Dixie
whin I want to stay with
yew.

52.

Pol Pot, Khomeni, Begin, Hitler, Stalin, Idi Amin, *et al.*
So *bloody* long! And I am moved
to my own tears when Nabil says
“I got no tears but I want to cry so bad.”

53.

On Sunset Drive, going to get my suitcase and
split for the airport, O what a beautiful
morning, Praise Jesus!
I see something midroad move, slow up.
A squirrel has been backbroke by a car
such as mine. It’s unconscious.

Its mate is trying to pull it out
of the street before it gets hit again.
O Praise Jesus! God is gracious, God is good
and we thank him in this mood.

54.

Food smell into the street.
“Ave Maria” from the organ,
ending the wedding.
Heart massage, the old, old
man down in the doorway. Calle Christo,
San Juan.
And *The Star* says the election has been
certified.

55.

I'm back in town again.
And it smells
of blood.

JOHNNY GOES A-HUNTING: fits 56 - 76

*My hearty friends,
You take me in too dolorous a sense:
For I speake to you for your comfort; did desire you
To burn this night with torches; know, my hearts,
I hope well of to-morrow...*

—Shakespeare
Antony and Cleopatra IV, ii

56.

Just at
a right time.

57.

Dearly among
dear ones.

58.

The fat man was the pilot.

59.

The co-pilot was on the phone 45 minutes.
That was why he stay slim.

60.

Krapp
In a burnt-out theatre
smiles.
It still
reeks
from fire and water:
munches smokey
bananas.

61.

And the scribbled-on paper which I stumbled on
six years later, never viewed before:
“I want to be your child, if not your lover.”

62.

12-gauge.

The feathers and the warm flesh underneath.
First kill. Last hunt.
(Trophies should not be terminal?)

63.

12-gauge.

Grandfather blasted and the rabbit turned end
over end. He was pretty. But he had warbles
so we could not eat him.

64.

Mittens and shotguns do not go together
in any weather.

65.

Abashed.

66.

Endless the lines of the endless dead, the
living crippled.

67.

“You are no fun. You make me think-faced.”

68.

Jesus Christ, Lord Buddha,
and the Natural (Shinto, say) Gods,
how competent?

69.

Lounge for well-wishers.

70.

You waved like a Coward song.
("I'll see you again.")

71.

There was plenty of White Horse on the flight.
He thought of Thoreau, then "Go, Rimbaud!"

72.

Takahashi: "My bowels swell like flowers."
We yearn to be a flower
once before we die.

73.

Iran. Iraq.

And Hani tells the universal coarse story:
Classic dominos of abuse:
Stepfather abuses young man who seduces
5-year-old girl then is killed by
gang-stah just as he clarifies his confusion
finding real love (*Nanami*).
"Let your preacher show you how to vote,"
—the urgent voice said just outside the
booth.

74.

Transitions. From Otis Elevator to Angel Heurtbise.
Jean-Claude: "Only fools confuse love with the
emission of sperm."

75.

And the jade green variations. An anarchy of clouds
and you. Okinawa. Sun and dolphin blood.

76.

This heart.

CALETA LAS MONJAS: A DAYBOOK

—To B.E.

*Culpat caro, purgat caro:
Regnat deus dei caro.
Flesh sins, flesh atones for sin;
God's Flesh reigns as God*

—Piers The Plowman
(Book XVIII)

TEN SUNDAYS

1

"You make the pass,"

I kept saying to myself and you finally did
and woke up around two or three and there
we were, spooned in each other's arms.
More close in my memory, nothing.

2

The smile, the eyes
that twin with equal ease
from this to that
from one to one on two
or four (three).

3

& then?

The eyes, &c &c

3 months

12 months

—well better than

4

Grasping for
breath to be what

we are already. Not very new, but just
supposing...

5

Some sort of death in San Juan.
(Do you remember the assault?
2 pushy Haris and 4 loud
Cleveland broads on dis-
embarkation? Sweet Dante!
Swift Beatrice!)

6

Over Bloody Mary's, thus Roberto after X left early:
"You wonder where X got that ten-inch scar, temple
to throat? He turned to say 'excuse me'
to a drag queen who had bumped into him 'round
3 a.m. at Ruffie's 2 blocks past the square.
X hung out in doorways a lot after he
got out of the hospital. Finally, say, man!
he saw, ran down and hammer-locked the kid;
drug him to some cops and told the tale.

In court, a wise, old Latin judge, in chambers, ended
the tedious trial fast and found Gillettes under
'her tongue.'"

7

If we leave as early as we must
it'll be too dark to
see the garden.

8

"A" as in Autumn to
 "S" as in Spring.

9

As one bonejarred from
 a fall, say from a horse, we, stun-running thru
 and not quite together. I reapproach your love,
 given as a gift should be or seen as imagination,
 or rolling on the bed, the grasp.

So, it was, hence & again
 the throwing of hearts as medieval poetry.

Here again you are in
 my arms and your pain and stun and so many
 beginnings. & how I mistreated some
 lovely hours plotting against yours
 in sweet intention forever. There is no lock on
 forever.

Well and awake here I am
 sitting; observe your profile, you breathe, touch
 you.

Right at dawn.

10 *Carolyn cooked beautiful meals
 on 2 burners for months.

*They all wear 10 rings in
 Livorno.

*I've never signed a hitch-
 hiking sign before! Such
 be fame.

*"It was only a babymoth,"
 you consoled.
 "But it made such a pop!"
 I refused.

*I did not like them
 When your mother did them.
 I did not, in fact, like
 your mother.

*Up on the mountain so high!
 Herds a-tilt against green.
 Their bells, remember?

*“He says he’s going into
 cement.”
 “So did Jimmy Hoffa.”

*Did you hear the TV promise?
 “Angora Foam lives.”

TEN MONDAYS

11

So, New Year’s Day in Old San Juan, we rose
 lazy in luxury’s half-dream appreciative of our
 realized impossibility. Later, after our short
 walk and breakfast you asked me why don’t I take
 photos of my travels and friends. I tell you
 “because I have no wish for the tears of remem-
 brance, anymore.” You smile at my operatic
 phrasing and match it: “Too much dies, no?
 Loves and places and peoples.”

Yes.

12

At suppertime one of the
 many personable & skinny
 SJ cats shoots across the
 street ahead of me & I re-
 call Alton, quoting an old
 black man: “It is not ungen’ly
 known a cat comes back &
 forth from Hell.”

13

& Danny said "You don't
have to use it just be-
cause it is pointing at
you."

14

Can anyone, realizing great love, respond to it?

15

Sandbagged into lunch with
The Great White Hope who
talked about giving up cocaine
while staring at my crotch and
caressing the host's wife's breast.
"Can't trust the locals," he said,
"they live on food stamps."

16

*Never remind customers
of themselves.*

17

O Santa Barbara
w/ your ophthalmic eyes!
O muse!

Hanging by your heels
certainly is another way to walk. You are too
pretty to take such risks. O to absorb you and
look out of your eyes. I'd die for that right
now (I think). "Love, Androcles."

18

Hey, Waffler! This one is
not unlike a Manila bar you
would remember! Look over
there! a bucketbutt babe and a painted queen who
would seem to have cancer of the wrist.

19

O Saint Barb,
 patron of artillery,
 give me Saint Eustace
 any day.

O Barb, Babe, this is
 too easy at the ear, I suppose. Out of habit,
 out of labor, out of industry.

O Barbara, Honey,
 out of computers, boon, boon!
 BOOM, BOOM!
 O.

20

The suddenly interesting wrinkles,
 Cora!
 Boom, boom (over the waters).
 Cora, core, core
 Angkor Thom!

TEN TUESDAYS

21

He is like sunlight!

22

& would that prove
 anything?

23

Nostalgia attack over my cat as I
 write six postcards with him on it to friends.
 Thorstein reminds me of Curtis in
 75% artificial light.

"What is the measure of that?"
 Take this afternoon's movement.
 Like Longfellow's gladiator, w/
 a couple of choked sobs I
 saluted you

then, banging around my own dry well, I imagined I wrote dead Ted Roethke & dead Bill Williams in shorthand, sent one copy to hell and the originals to heaven & calm again, went the the balcony & looked out at the harbor a long time

just at sunset.

24

Yes, I think you
 are
 nice; no suit wrongly bid.
two no trump

25

Jesus, it's grand to
 be awake at 1:05 a.m. going into the 2nd day of
 a year, and utterly happy.
 I size it up: the day spent, the year spent,
 45 years spent and I am awake, almost awake
 ...and the lulling of the ceiling fan...
 feeling about my whole person an aura,
 feeling totally in my mother's arms.
 How can I explain this lovely feeling to you,
 who know my weakest side, my whine?

26

Read E.F.Benson, thought lots of Lorca, had coffee, did laundry, thought Cavafy, read Benson, the frivol of not taking last go, then Fowlie's splendid new book & the *Star* & after the washer

washed and the drier dried sat on the doorsill in the sun & watched the bay. Brief chats w/ two nice women while the drier dried, two nice visits w/ my landlord. Simple breakfast, dogsleg past the governor's mansion to see more bay, then the square, wandering thru stores, bumped into Frank, who usually sleeps til one or two. If only every day...etc.

27

Love's body: a cat
from the breastbone to the
navel.

Stitched evenly. Body of
lattice garment.

The beauty of pain cannot be appreciated
adequately

by anyone who caused the grief. Lattice. Takes an
artist and a public.

28

"Hi can I help?"

29

"You can put any of them
into a tape deck
if you are a master
electrician."

30

"You're catching the summer flu," I said.
"No, I've just got what the MacMillan twins
had," she said.

TEN WEDNESDAYS

31

He told me of the family, large
 & lots of grandparents & "greats" too,
 still growing. The mother dead in New York
 (two years)—and the fight.

"Two jumped me; black, one's girlfriend cheering—
 they cut my belly. I swing with a ballbat &
 broke one's face near the left ear. He ran. I swing
 at the other and I think I break his left leg
 below the knee
 and then I break I think his other leg. I am
 bleeding from my stomach.
 The girl she ran away screamin'.
 I, like I said, bleedin' bad.
 I pass out, my belly hanging. They got me
 to a hospital, somebody.
 I don't remember how and
 sewed me up. I suppose to die for
 two months.

"I will never go back
 to New York. I will kill myself
 by jumping
 off a roof
 from sadness for my mother.
 I always cry through Christmas. New Years
 even if I am happy.

"My mother is floating there. There! Look!
 Dead two years now. If the world would end
 tonight I would somehow find
 two men
 and kill them."

32
 Biggest
 Fourth
 of
 July Parade
 is in
 SAN JUAN.

& this dude & his dudess got
 sloshed, reckon they Hot
 Redz, so I hope it was vodka &
 anyway set forth to stop the
 parade by kidnapping the
 consul from Venezuela. But
 their optics being mucked up
 kidnapped the Chilean consul

& the last I heard Pinochet
 wanted them extradited to
 Lima for trial. (Jack & Jill
 and bowel control, etc.)
 and the parade was great &
 the crowd chanting: *Car-los, Car-
 los, Car-los.*

33
 Seven & Eleven jog together
 above El Moro.
 I remember the NYC marathon
 & I think of Yozo & the Pope
 jogging together
 in red, white and blue Adidas.

34
 Thank you for your submission
 We would like to accept it, but
 Just bloody can't.

35

On San Francisco Street
a beautiful red-headed child
with cancer of the knee (they
tell me) and a cane
smiles
and keeps pace with
two friends.
She is about nine years old.

It doesn't apply to our plans to go
to midnight mass very much.
"We flies," as Mr. Shakespeare said.

But I'll bet she does.
So maybe
we should go ahead,
too.

36

Who has never quite understood pride...

37

"You must pay up."

"I pay in advance."

"I have no record."

"But I did."

"Too bad, you miss the passions
in that case."

38

I'll bet Imelda Marcos
looked like you when
she was your age, but

My Beauty of the Holiday Inn Casino...get ready:
will inherit the same double chin as your Ma.

39

In my heaven, Rupert,

there will be no snow.

Just whoring
& constancy.

40

They keep telling me
what a fright
Tokyo is nowadays.

TEN THURSDAYS

41

How awful to fall in love with an airport.
Even the concepts of. Icarus. Jesus. & all.

42

Martha used to go out to
Raleigh-Durham Airport in
North Carolina and lie on
her back on a small hill
where she would be smacked by
any falling plane if it
failed (on that particular
lane) to make it up, not
having money for a ticket
or entertainment that was
worthy of her imagination.

She always said she got off
on the exhaust fumes. Which
beats the hell out of me, but
I still like to fill my own
gas tanks. I guess, you know
it's not everybody's
thing.

43

Dear Swiss! Guarding
such anger, you didn't have to say
it was your last two dollars. Plenty
been shitfaced drunk at 10 a.m. of
a few Sundays. The pleasure, sir,
be mine. My name be Harry T. Dog.
Maybe we'll meet at Malatesta's
in Zurich under reversal.
Or our ambassadors.

Small World Bar/Open faced to Jewels
of The World.

Mancuria III.

44

"I *have* ridden one
and I *am* riding one."

"Do not get academic
with me!"

"Chaucer's eagle..."

45

Beauty, Beauty, what can I say out of my bunker?
 little hurts and pinched victories? Dumbass
 silence and coweyes are best, if it's one of the
 two. You straighten your
 hair and smile at me from the mirror as in Coc-
 teau's Orpheus and say
 "I think if I am just a little better looking
 or maybe a better mirror, it would break."

46

The Swedenborgian Bishop
 & his wife are in town.

47

Across the bay
 eating at the
 carnival, it's tasty
 smokey & beautiful in
 the dark. Nobody can
 see the slick Bacardi
 factory. Everybody's
 nice to each other for
 a while.

48

As on New Year's Eve one is alone
 under any circumstances, but now
 water splashes
 over the shoulders, into the street.
 "Uno, due, tre..." kids sing
 their lungs redder.
 Under the street
 light a beautiful
 woman, maybe 26, dashes
 out an old Spanish door.

And three paces behind her a delicate young man.
 The governor's palace is aglow with light
 and the music comes easily across the block.

49
 Flamenco?
 Flamenco!

50

I come in from the balcony now,
 have a rum and weep
 for your face and heart
 and the weave of your scars.

TEN FRIDAYS

51
 & in Singapore
 a friend's potential suicide
 over a cookbook

which a review in "my" magazine could hardly
 reverse. Big printing costs. No sales.

52
 & Saltzman, 10 yrs ago, said
 "It's either heroin
 or cheap champagne."

53
 & Jacqueline absolutely
 denied *all*
 responsibility for the sugar
 turtle.

and Bill Williams said, in essence, how can we get
 said what must be said.

54

& the Princess Bride
 may have smiled & died but at least
 you, Terri, did not get blown up
 goodscouting at the movie set.

55

Either of them, being broader framed
 would look less tall.

56

& Jon said
 "You are relentless."

57

& Vic said
 "You poets sure do hang
 together."

58

Eyes
 eyes
 & your

laughter

Funny world.
 Only

59

Delightful and
 slow the odor of musk about you. The skin
 would drive mad with jealousy
 many women
 many men
 God knows
 about family.

60

& The Rev said "Not
nearly enough
of it has
been suppressed!!!" &

that's when we got broadsided by
a nun.

TEN SATURDAYS

61

Long night,
early to the sunny sidewalks.

there you were
with your lover.

62

& one Three Kings' Day your arms were
loaded with gifts. & from clear across
the street
you winked at me (Calle San Francisco)—
eyes like the sheen of the sun off water,
while your daddy bounced three
paces ahead!

63

Rousting about

64

Copelia last night at Old San Juan
Opera House.

65

(Who is in a
Purple Haze.)

66

First memories of the Caribbean. & they say
 Christopher Colon went there first too. Iceland.
 & I think of Cherubino, Vickers-Smith, at Keflavik
 Iceland, and Mike and Teddy and she with cancer and
 then of a sudden there was I and the George on a
 street in Bermuda. Hamilton. And in traffic and
 nobody got killed jumping about and he said Kath's
 cancer was cured and he was off back to London, in
 an hour,
 and by then the traffic was pretty stopped and
 we embraced and I sent my love to Kath and never
 of course saw either again and the Bermudan over-
 British sense of propriety, aye-God, was offended.
 Oop !a! & Houston dreamed of Sonoko a decade later
 —or was it a hundred years?

67

And Hannah said, at the English
 Speaking Union, after 4 brandies,
 "There we were at the International
 Date Line, and there was a battleship
 all over the dumbell's chest. I
 simply couldn't have that, could I?"

68

Mable & Gert don't like Aikie
 & Aikie don't like Bruce
 & after 2 hours of that I go to bed with you
 & you don't like that because I snore in dream &
 blurt out "My Jesus, My Mary, My Joseph, O Father
 O Son, O Holy Gooooost."

69

Kri/kri

it's green green & what seems

my left ear finally gets into snooping. It is a no, not a gurgle, but deep in the singing apparatus so far I know it a true response not flirt
 O I am glad to be here very confused given that it is a night before the full moon, into the rest of this confusing bargain & I have been dreaming back anyway in recent weeks.

It's direction, that direction worries me; back, I mean. It's this dark dawn worries me, the moonlight's disappearance, & what is to become of you.

Elmer Rice's Shrdlu can't be it. Hope's more than that. Cow is the Time To Come; is Mother, perhaps. Cats and chickens and crocodiles, and everything that begins with "c" is good.

All appetite is far from gone but is so unpredictable...as foods, affections. The near panics of early childhood unbecome one. We pretend they are gone for good. More liars we.
 At our ages they portend the same loss, I fear.
 But we add *what was the use? to what is the use?*
 & recall
 from catalogs
 all the passions that we stifled
 to death.
 Another opening another show and we paste on the smile, rev up the laugh and head downstairs with Alf and the 2nd Lt. headed for Nam the next, nonetheless extend the hand one more time..

70

We were in the palace laughing together. We were Egyptians then

GUISES: A CHAINSONG FOR THE MUSE

—*To Joshu*

I.

I am here
the fourth time,
16 years to the day since the last
I discover by calendar (not plan)
in my room in the Esja Hotel, Reykjavik,
not even built then!
27 years since the first: & in the 26th
year thereof, the first time in your arms
through that dearest one of three
even then your surrogates.

We are each always in a different guise,
but in this guise I've not by odds
as long to live again, by half, where
you we know eternal.

You lower your eyes.
Beautiful!

The drumbeat of the rain.
The mountain across and
the bay half hidden.

*Joash was seven years old
when he began to reign, and
he reigned forty years in
Jerusalem. His mother's name also
was Zibiah of Beersheba.*

*And Joash did that which was
right in the sight of the Lord all
the days of Jehoiada the priest.*

*And Jehoiada took for him
two wives; and he begat sons and
daughters.*

*And it came to pass that after this
Joash was minded to repair
the house of the Lord.*

*All time is in time.
All time is out of time.*

The bay half hidden.
Beautiful!

II.

The child is going
back to the flag poles.
He has proudly raised
the flags at daybreak
as he proudly lowered them
in the wind and rain
last evening.

He now goes with
a dustpan and small broom
to make the grooming
as fine as it can be for
the day. His clipped
hair over his brow
brown, blown in the wind.

His hair is gray.

III.

*...We bring our years to an end,
as it were, a tale that is told.*

The cross
& the harp
& the many
who weep
honor you.

*Comfort us now
after the time that thou hast
plagued us*

for we are yet outlaws.

IV.

He holds the delicate
well-muscled body,
the cross made
by the sword at rest now
in the dragon's neck.

*We brought nothing
into this world
after the time that thou
hast plagued us.*

V.

& even we renegades
can see their hollow eyes, their
frightened children:
the workers out of work
who would work.

*Comfort us again now
after the time that thou
hast plagued us*

VI.

My darling's
skeleton.

VII.

The dawn is fierce.
The dawn is a brute.

VIII.

See the calm headsman?
See the job done?
See the axe-finished corpse?
There, at the base of the cliff.

IX.

Yet as from a gambler's dice throw-fate
on the other side of the rise,
far side of desperation,
one lies on his back
face-up to the cow's teats &
she nourishes him, benignly,
and he will rise and see
to her food and shelter
after all.

*I should utterly have fainted,
but that I believe verily to see
the goodness of the Lord in
the land of the living.*

Still...

X.

The deaths of
all
we love!

The young and the great and
predictable
coequal death-hurt,
our contemporaries.

XI.

We pray
& weeping
hide
our eyes.

XII.

Building, building
against all odds.

XIII.

Perhaps
a king out of Egypt?
or Iceland?

XIV.

The mother's vision!

XV.

The pain of the mother.

XVI.

Dependency,
 labor
 & prayer
 & labor.
 I do not understand
 & am
 even too weary
 to curse.

XVII.

See? The strong old one restrains
 the young man
 & whispers in his ear,
 each on the back
 of the same
 dying horse.

EPILOGUE:

*Thou foolish one,
 that which thou sowest
 is not quickened,
 except it die;
 and that which thou sowest,
 thou sowest
 not that body that shall be,
 but bare grain...
 but God giveth it a body
 and to every seed
 its own body.*

*All flesh
is not the same flesh.*

You!
Rising from this meditation,
come
in your birthday suit
(with a top hat),
& tangle limb
cavort on the lawn
between the
stable
butts of
wine.

It will not darken utterly
for some time.

II
From King of August

To Y.M.

DEMANTINN

(*The Diamond*)

In the lithe hand of fate
the diamond of myself
as of the world.

I lean against the strong thumb
sustaining that from which “To come”
will be wrought

And extend my arms back
similarly to sustain,
advance the head

And protect the strings of
my winged harp.
O strong hand under which I shall play!

ALDA ALDANNA

(*The Wave of the Ages*)

You drown us dearly,
your eyes up proud
as your shoulders and breasts.

There are wings in this water,
though we die in its hair, tangled,
face down, side washt, lockt jaws.

Washt back we
lust for beauty in the last look.
Who does not admire the bold corpse?

There are wings in this water,
though we die in its hair, tangled,
face down, side washt, lockt jaws.

Pushing its finality!
“Last flesh wash back on us”
we cry—pale
watery men, fearful
and condemned now
as the necrophiliac.

There are wings in this water,
though we die in its hair, tangled,
face down, side washt, lockt jaws.

SAMVIZKUBIT

(*Remorse*)

Hands
grow out of my head,

Pull
my eyelids back.

You are gone.
I built the wrack.

I turned the wheel,
smiled as your bones cracked.

Hands
grow out of my head.

Dearest!
Dearest!

I, day after night
cannot close my eyes.

Day after night jut
the jaw, the teeth toward death.

Hands grow out
of my head and

I cannot close my eyes
(day after night),

Their fingers refuse
to allow it.

You are gone.
No assuagement.

POE

(to Edgar Allan Poe)

I throw one arm around you, Poe,
my other arm toward the sky.

Together we lurch toward the back
of the fierce, crying bird.

It is big enough to take us
away, where we wish to be.

DEIGLAN

(*The Crucible*)

The faithful cross
imbedded in the shoulders of God
will not be pain,
but grace.

Leaven.

All heaven
life's bread—crimson
while black sky encourages us,
that there will
be air, blue clear!

That will be it!
The skull will smile properly!

THE FOUR PHASES

I (MORGUNN)

My eagle!
 My child!
 My father!
 My beloved's face fresh and eager,
 head up and arms out!

Certainly this is our time and
 certainly dawn came,
 certainly, joyously.

Gold, white and yellow,
 flesh, feather and
 touch.
 Eye, heart, heather.

We rise on wings.

II (DAGUR)

Under the piles, under the welded
 past we move.
 Spirit or fact or hope
 imagined or known
 leads us.
 We know our sinews stronger.
 The road's ahead.

III (KVOID)

Le Soir.
 Der Abend.
 Child in my arms
 I cover you gently.

IV (NOTT)

Shroud over us, your hands are firm
on our skulls. Darken us,
rest us, caress, annul.
We will not fear
your wet black hair
over our faces. We were there, we
accept the kiss.
Comfort us here.

KJARNINN

(*The Essence*)

Hard as the face,
Hard as the face mask,
bright as the beams
of clear, cold light,
heart at the lips of
imagined lovers,
beauty and leisure
carved in, cut in.

A kiss! A kiss,
gold armored mask!

DOGUN

(*Dawn*)

Bastard!
holding up the lady's body
against the horizon
to make hope
disguise truth.

I would spit in your teeth
but you scare me stupid,
so like th most ignorant
I buy your vision, blind myself
to your fist
and won't think on the fate
of that simple structure,
the town I dreamed.

You overcome even
Thor and Wotan.
How might I think against you?
Heated and Southern God,
Impossible Force: Impossible Love.

VATNSDROPINN

(*The Water Drop*)

Her breasts apart,
her legs spread, and
the sinewy ones
thus cover each other over
and under
heaving and heaving
their locked-up love.

The gentle youths
hold hands
and one's hand smooths shoulder,
the other's free hand embraces his neck.
A Greek column centers
this picture completely:
phallus and pole,
cross and pillar.

Old age plaits
flowers of memory, leaning,
alone;
Myopic, smiling.

Below it all the infant angels
chain silver flowers,
re-herald the waterdrop
sperm of God.

NOTT

(*Poem of Night*)

The One of the thrusting tendon,
wide, strong wing, said
“I understand this spanning and clutching
on what for a moment’s an airborn bed—and
my wing is so great
they cannot see
the moon is past.”

FAEDING PSYCHES

(*La Naissance de Psyche*)

Her Breasts are on his bent knees,
other hands press down firm
on a tight belly.

Now! The buttocks pressed firm,
firm smoothing of leg-calf, the four
work together.

A kiss on his breast, a kiss
on her forehead: all four
in this passion,

And she eager to live!
Psyche is born.

VATNESSPEGILLIN

(*The Water Mirror*)

(1)

See what I see!

A boy lockt in mid-air, as crucified
by a bloated, floating crossbeam
which grabs, like two dough arms, one wrist.
Two suet legs paralyze the other, and he hangs
like Christ on Golgotha, but seen from here he
kisses the center like a lover's navel.

His head hangs back.

If he's dead why do his lips adhere there?

(2)

An arm takes her arm,
an arm coming from a white mist.
She leans her neck and
kisses a stone were the ghost's chest should be.

Flowers appear
at her right hip.

(3)

The upperclass lovers slink away, arm on a shoulder
the other raised for
proper silence.

She carries something in her arms discreetly,
like a pig.

(4)

Beaten, bruised
two others together, upside down,
scraggled and roughed, matted hair, how they
try to spare their child.

Hopeless
Look.

(5)
Lover alone and upside down,
"Where did she go?"
Memory grips bramble garland
and an ear-ring.

Gone.
And why?

(6)
The body and face are utterly grace'
ful and he lies face down, nose like a
drill aimed at the snout and at the ground.
His arms are locked over the
earth's face. Total embrace is the effect
as he lies down with the huge white swine,
and the tusk of the earth harpoons their bed,
welds them together,
lover and lover, haver and haver-

Narcissus the lover,
Narcissus the loved.

DREKINN

(The Dragon)

Full-winged, alive
 pterodactyl beak taking
 air the dragon coils
 there both maid and stalwart warrior done,
 if he moves right-cooling it-
 if he wants 'em all done,
 forever.

He digs the scene a while,
 the thought.

And then! We look again!

The girl lies back in the aperture.
 The stalwart fondles her knees while his head's
 against her belly, looking down now draws
 her calves against his pubic hair,
 appears carefully, casually, to knock off
 the two last dragon claws. We see the dragon,
 now dead, is a resting place. His skull grins
 that his frame's a place to rest and make love in.

L'Envoi:

The churchbell dings Oriental
 on the Akureyri air. And midnight
 sun lights, as song, the Akureyri air, like
 drekinns who knew the score
 but really didn't care.

KONGUR ATLANTIS

(*King of Atlantis*)

Atlantis' King
embraced two oxen
as he sat properly on his throne.

His helmet shone silver,
his face not reflecting
earthly emotion.

His confidence, gold,
could not be moved by
temporal things.

His mind prepared
was equal to
engulfing torrents.

Who has known such proper leaders?
Were his people faithful and
ready as his oxen?

SORG

(*Grief*)

The crypt cannot contain
the cold contempt of the lost.
Below, in marble, the dancers
holding the fan, boldly embossed,
steplockt, move on.

The angles stand and the
grief-stayed hand still
gropes toward memory.
But memory's also put off.
In the bared, retreating back's
a future lust. The rounded
sinew, the skin's own oil
proclaim what moves us.

Blind palm scrapes the cement
art; tears hot on the arm
temper on the thigh, though
mourned figure and the beautiful
mourner dance, and lie.

GLIMAN*

(Wrestler)

The gliman must know
how to whip off balance,
gain it back quickly, control
the rigidity,
flex fast,
stay in the power, stay
in the dance!

I've seen the young cones,
all sizes
at it in Reykjavik. "Prowess,
power, skill are good,"
fact sings. they and the watcher
know it still in the second
of tension, of

Imminence
before fall.

*Glima is Icelandic wrestling. As unique
and distinct as, say, Sumo.

KONUMYND*(Statue of a Woman)*

Touch the cross, Beautiful Flower,
and from this hour
may love embrace you
for you have tendered
to your own
such tenderness.

GLIMA JAKOBS*(Jacob Wrestling with the Angel)*

Proud, bright, quite handsome
and very strong, smug Jacob
the wrestler wrenched
down soundly
tricked into becoming
God's premier.

Í TROLLAHONDUM

(*In the Hands of the Trolls*)

Now the've got him!
 The giant ones place
 left knee to right knee,
 clasp hands over his knees in a tough clamp
 using the free hands, the inner, to grip even tighter,
 so with one arm each hauling tight the net
 on the young, brash man
 who went out of his way
 this once too often.

They grit their teeth,
 their jaws jut.
 They know this part is done with,
 whatever he thinks.
 It remains to devise,
 that's all.

LAUSN

(*Deliverance*)

Bring out of the grave,
 bring into the grave,
 out of the man and into the man
 Hope beyond *here*,
 O Christ, we pray—
 knowing you, Lord,
 Strongest of Sufferers,
 Strongest of All.

UTLAGER

(*Outlaw*)

Wrapped in sheepskin he
places a kiss
on the fear-ripped cheek.

What good does it do?
His father's eyes
bulge more and more,

Who sucks his cheeks against
the cold—teeth—tighter, harder
grips the pole

That serves as staff
and will as weapon
at least for a while, if need be,

Who steps ahead and looks into dusk
again in wind's teeth as the tired,
defensive dog paces each step.

Sandal on rock, the driven-away
must wait and see and not think
far ahead, must

Hoist his shoulders, the burden,
the corpse of his love,
whose arms hang loose.

Down on his back the long legs
of the dearest burden
save the child; burden

Eyes shut, whose head
hangs loosely as her hair,
free breasts, sack-covered only

Belly still lovely,
face up the dark sky, confront,
turning, The North.

Now again the smaller one presses love.

Outlaw!
Outlaw!

SKULD

(*The Skull*)

Two are dead and
the powerful horse is down,
his back broken, and his hind legs—
but still his head is wild,
his Trojan mane is up
—his neck pivots
to see two on his back writhe, one prisoner.

The winner's damp hair
is over his eyes
and he clamps the rider with one arm
—with the other strikes hard
to the animal's proud neck
and grabs the rein.
The scene holds, in his power.

TIMIN

(*Time*)

Angel, hold your strong
and beautiful arms around
my world;

Child, strong, carefully
handle the growing:
balance.

Mother, child, pillar,
angel,
the wreath joins us.

MODIR og SONUR

(*Mother and Son*)

This mother, this son,
both in despair
know nothing can count,
nothing is there
except they rejoice
in each other over all pain.

III

From A Beast In View

—To Dan Mizell

*All, all of a piece throughout
Thy Chase had a Beast in View;
Thy Wars brought nothing about;
Thy Lovers were all untrue.
Tis well an Old Age is out,
And time to begin a New*

—John Dryden

RETURNING IN JANUARY

And two years gone
yet you remember me!

We both sense the love
who never “met.”

Promises are made
before new leaving

And saying words
we will hold to is joy

These petals will not drop,
time or not.

THE DAY BEFORE YOU GAVE ME THE PORTRAIT OF GIRLS FISHING

I was on the train
running parallels,
found a dozen or more
years,
thought on that Iceland bus
that ran on counterclockwise
24 hours every day
and that long trip
from Chicago to
Iowa City in midsummer.
On the way to see you!
Fuchu
Shinjuku
Shibuyaku
Rails singing me into
Jingumae.

ALONE

Cats
 & chickens.
 My fingers are
 bamboo.

Ah, Parishoners,
 one gropes months
 in the hours
 before dawn.

We are like
 the osage orange
 between Umapine
 & Wallula.

I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU

I thought it
 was you
 turning in bed—listening
 I know
 it is just the rain, heavier.

First I've heard
 in a long time—
 breathe deep.
 I rest easier.
 Happily.

Floods?
 I doubt it,
 if so
 we'll cope later,
 in due time.

KUNEO

I. New Mazda
Orange
odor softens
Tuesday night chill,
you waiting me in
your first car, smile.

This is all new
to both of us.
Lights go on, then
we go together
into the night,

II. Item
They butcher porpoises
in the bay
off Nago, North
Okinawa.

The slaughter makes
the waters of sea red
as new cherries,
Kuneo said.

Many come to watch
each year.

SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

And so you woke and wondered
and were afraid last night alone
pitched into considerations of *who* and *if*
and if there is a home
any are quiet in.
“It is sincerely to be hoped
that these childish recycles of worry
won’t be repeated often.”

The wondows are tin.
There has been no rain in Tokyo for 57 days.
The city, you are told, is like a tinder box.
You fool romantics dwell
on painful, passionate ends.

THAT DAY IN THE SHADOW OF APOLLO

Yukio, you in the garden were looking at the roses.

Suddenly,
the boy was there again. You noticed him—in his school
uniform.

Not as you or I would have it. Grungy, middleclass,
kind of ugly.

Not rich-cut or sharp, not threadbare, boneclean
and sharp.

Came back four days in a row. You knew now
it would go on.

Holy Pinter! So: five strides eye-to-eye
you put it:

"Ask any single question. I'll answer it if
you'll go away."

And then, finally, you gave him—the odd kid—
your smile, your incomparable smile.

"OK," he said (no smile).
"When are you going to kill yourself?"

BAMBOO MAP

I.

"*& yours my wrestler
is the soul of a
musician.
& I so obtuse
in all the ways."*

II.

What did you think?
"I
admired him."

END OF SUMMER

Hakone,
over cable too long
over the sulfur pots
broiling hearts' rinds
already brown.

*& in Yotsuya
I heard of
happy unhappy
neither & open
endings.*

FUNCTIONS

“Don’t you scare me” – Prince Hiro, about four years

“Please, may I go paddle in the mud?”
 asked Napoleon’s son, who did not cry at 3
 on parade in public, first time his daddy
 forced him into that dumb gaze under the trumpets.
 Did not cry, even on that huge and monster horse.

“You were grand, my son, splendid little man. Anything
 you wish is yours.”

“Please, may I go paddle in the mud?”
 O DeSade,
 O Freud,
 All this unnecessary nonsense

O professors, pedagogues, preachers,
 salon-eests, stupideos,
 revolutionists.

Architects in
 kind
 are all/that matter.

Having won all races, the race
 is elemental joy,
 not contortion; straight
 incision for healthy recovery by
 intelligent doctors. “No twisty thoughts.”
 Clean knife.
 Shaman knowing function.

Function placing
 proper worship
 current & back & ahead.
 & one recalls E.P. quoting Nap's words,
 "First element, mud."

The good of gold & silver & steel: lasting
 roads, aquaducts & simplicity, single flowers,
 & clean plaques,
 honoring.

IMPRINTS

I. Kaname Dori
 It's Akira The Hun!
 And we talk of whoring,
 bad season in Yokohama,
 my old lover.

You had
 bad luck all day yesterday
 in Yokohama.
 We drink

To
 old lovers,
 ourselves,
 Yokohama. Tomorrow.

II. The Novelist in Azabu
 Raising the sone,
 the fine face to the light,
 we listen to Mozart and talk death.
 "There is no ending. One stops."
 I read the tide in your face like a book.

III. Irish Writer in Akasaka

Rain. Wet. The air lonely.
Where you are in heart's wish there
is a peat fire, its own kind of courage.
Not humid passion. A bright
against bone cold.

IV. Harajaku

Mind a tentative string,
trying for tone.
Waking at three,
Teru
Teruo
Teru, Te . . .

A different year but
the love has not changed.

How splendid
the sound of rain tonight.

AS HE IS

Between Trini Lopez
at Kanami Dori
& the appointment in Ginza
lie twenty minutes.
Twenty lento years
standing on the
subway.

MICHYUKI

Koga, Koga
where are you
now that I
needja?

To go out
of the Ark
also needs extreme
love and aid.

MAKURA-KOTOBA

Our coming together from far ends
amazes us both,
neither knowing the other
was cowardly too,
two years ago,
now we confess it, laughing.

We joy in such presence
my cynical dear:
we are in love,
knowing it usually passes
with flowers and years—
still honoring it.

On waking at four
by your beautiful person
I listened
to your heavy breathing
two hours with no wish to sleep:
I refused to sleep.
With sun through shades
at nine I woke again,
saw the perfect flower
of your ear on my inner arm,
pressed into it. Celebrated
quietly another hour.

Now we part with hot coffee
and without grief
planning, instead of tears,
outrageous attacks on future years
to keep our hearts as dry as wit
whatever our eyes think of it.

AUGUST PILLOW: A *Tokyo Notebook*

I.

The accordian bands in the street!
Punctuation of these summer days
before the rains,
before the dances of the people at o-bon
at night before the shrine
—a little climb above the tori, Akasaka,
where we were last year
before the lithe and naked boy
drumming constantly
under the lanterns
sweating and smiling foot to foot.

We wake in the dark before dawn and
even before I am sure
your voice is rich with Verlaine,
soft, clear.
Under your hands and dreams I am happy.

I also understand faces turned
to walls, to die.

Your
Saint Sebastian: Ordeal by Roses
Sebastian Venable
Sebastian Melmoth
Sebastian Flight.
Night knowing night.

If butterflies
could have barristers,
what a lawyer Mitomi!

Bomepinsudet, you want to go
 into international law?
 Your face is suddenly serious
 in the noisy dance bar.
 The jape, the jibe vanish.
 The mask at last is down!
 Is it that you're half Irish?
 Hiro and Nori! Here you are again. Sheer
 accident, 2 years later outside a movie in
 Ginza, and a Hari Krishna from
 Fayetteville, Nawth Kay-line-uh and me &
 11 million other souls in the city!

Ruth takes me to the cabaret to see
 Cha-Cha San on stage. Now I have
 only seen Cha-Cha San off-stage at
 Mike's Bar and one party; have been
 much impressed by the langue, and I like
 Cha-Cha's favorite phrase,
 "Goddamnsunovabitch." I prefer it to the current
 "Ya-know?-ya-know" street and student lingo.

Now Cha-Cha flicks a
 sharp bright smile
 as only the snake god has.
 "We shall see," we say, despite ourselves,
 drawn to a fearful grace that's far from funny.

"Goddamnsonovabitch' I want to make
 it to the United States. On my
 acting. I been to Los Angeles once."
 Tonight the snake god's spirit
 is undying once again, wears a top-
 hat, mahogany cane glitters, points
 at me, at me from the stage. Among hundreds
 am I ever proud! Goddamnsonovabitch
 me, the worst-dressed paleface in the
 bloody Tokyo Hilton.

It's the hound-dog, Fame, we're
a-hunting!
—Let the silly bitch come to
bay.

Curl to my arm,
avert harm here
this night.
Wear this amulet.

Quiet, quiet the words.
You are tired, so tired.
You can't stay awake.
Tell my fortune
with your new book
tomorrow.

II.

It starts to quake; six p.m. Did Kimi-san tell me
to stand between the doorposts or away from
the door posts if there was a quake? I duck in the
corner, under small desk.

Ruth makes most Tokyo taxi drivers seen benign!

We arrive OK, though, from Kimi-san's house
across the swich-swash of cars in cold rain
to see the bonny Blue Tigers, her current fancy
at the Club Speed, in Roppongi.

The Tigers seem pretty
 darned tame for a fag hi group,
 dancing limply together, nonplussed and nilly,
 at most keen-absorbed in their Amurrikan
 Backup man, soloist.

Oh!
 he do twist him ersatz

joy shout!
 He fellates and finally humps his guitar.
 The latter is safer because it's electric.
 "The planets are ours," screams
 The Leader.

And all this we paid thru the nose for?
 Sweet Genji!
 Roppongi, Roppongi,
 put up your hair.

III.

Five o'clock rush in Shibuya-ku. Delight of late afternoon warm, the sun has a few (maybe 20) moments of rich tones left. I'm lost but unscheduled. Mellower than not. A s usual at such an hour it's noisy and crowded. A Kid—probably 18—is on an outside phone calling his girl. It's a pretty tough assignment under these circumstances. With a million noises and sights and faces and incidents and general motion in this movieset color, and happily fuddled and lost, as I said, I'm arrested anyway. His face and intensity! I take out my pad. What a metaphor:

*Love
 should still
 be hanging
 on the
 phone*

I scratch it on the five-by-three paper. And then I have to laugh. I'm trying to be Shelley and it comes out Thurver. And besides it is a picture, and with these simple lines it just comes out cartoon. And anyway my egghead friends will tell me Bergson will never let the receiver be put down, thank you.

*Is anyone
ever exactly
at the other end
of the
line?*

Having got a fish cartoon this time, I think I'd better get back to Hobbes and leave off Bergson for now.

The kid finally hangs up. the glow goes. And there's a Kirin Beer Hall.

Ah! In the beer hall I sit alone & watch the 80-year-old dude & his 20-year-old girlfriend.

All this jazz about the calm precise Japanese! The vertical society creates this illusion, at best a half-truth. E.g., when the waiter fired the souffle at the wrong time at Maxim de Paris' de Tokyo and threw it away to keep himself from being consumed in flame, chucking it right at Ruth, who, supra, ducked—just in time.

IV.

I didn't cry or rage when you went out last hour,
with no explanation. From 10 on til 11:30 I'd
watched you dress and preen watched you watch
me whirl in a dumb anguish as you stood in front of the
mirror.

"You don't mind, do you, Darling?" you finally said.
And then the door shut.

Love or hate it sure botches supper. But the action's
barely started in Kaname Dori at Shire
or Bokshin
or the Regent.
Go to Hell!

V.

Two days left and
Hiro again appears. Hiro—four feet nine and 21.
Shattered dreams, shakey future
and several arrests. And as if that weren't
enough, the girlfirend is loyal,
and her Dad's a banker. You, Hiro? Your
Pop's a mere salesman.

Well, my reformed glue addict, as
tough and high hearted as you are,
with a girl like Nori, I'm damned
if I don't think
you'll make it.

I'd like to have seen you on that campus
soapbox
talking right-wing politics through your
bullhorn, crying out for a student strike
and half a block away Nori on her soapbox,
urging pacific socialism and no-strike
into hers.

And it was, after all, Jesuit Sophia U.,
and what did the good Fathers think?
And did you two giggle and run
from it when the others began punching?

The last time we rally
you hand me the goodbye package, opaque cellophane;
inside is Mishima's *Golden Pavilion*, first edition,
which of course you couldn't afford.
What can I say, my friend?
good luck on the next set of odds.

It opened my adrenalin to flood
to be paged by name in Haneda, all over
Haneda, 30 minutes before the posted boarding
time. I'd thought there was civil time left
to linger over a drink with Minoru, keep our
plan to be contained and "mature."
It was seemingly working. Then the p.a.
and everything crunched in. Like a beautiful
gift you hear break in the bag.

IV

From You Poor Bastard

—To Rundy & Wave

What's love got to do with respectability?

—Faulkner

Vilia Miretur vulgus.

—Martial

*Coercion...has made one half of the world fools
and the other half hypocrites.*

—Jefferson

WELL I LOST

everything you gave me—
the pen in Dublin
at the Post Office,

your letter back in
London,
your address in Philadelphia.

You poor bastard,
you'll never hear
from me again.

JUST A LYRIC FOR LEO

Sometimes I feel
like a mother—
less toe,

O sometimes I feel
like a motherless
toe,

Yeh, sometimes I feel
like a mother—
less toe,

O why the sock it
has to have
a public hole?

GEOGRAPHIES OF THE MORAL BRUTE

Lawyer: Look, she's left hairpins all over the floor again.

Officer: So he has discovered the hairpins too.

—Strindberg: *A Dream Play*

I. (Northern Virginal)

"Kiss me
til I bleed,"
she said.

I did.
She bled.

II. (Southern Virginal)

She pled
"Hump me
til ah faint."

Ah trahd.
Ah kaint.

III. (Universal Virginal)

Our only health
is our disease?

Heaven help us to the Sulpha, please.

HOMAGE TO ROD McEWEN, E.A. GUEST & MRS. BROWNING

When I consider how my life
has been
before my brain has teamed up
with my pen
I rue the ruck and welter,
toil and strife,
and take Professor Gluck's
Beginning Creative Writing Course
once again.

TWO FOR JONATHAN WILLIAMS

I.

*Found Objects: The Writer Discovered Trying
To Whitmanize Himself In The University
Of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill*

A.

Scholars to come! Orators, artists,
musicians to come!

Ph.Ds. to come...

Come, come, come, come, come to the
card cat-a-log, at The Old U's Li-bray-ree

(&c)

Come to the guide, scholars pale . . .

(&c)

B.

1. "Bayes and Minimax Procedures in Sampling from Finite Populations."
2. "Bayes' Estimation of Proportions."
3. "A Bayes two-stage test for The Mean, Some Proportions of."
4. "Bayesian Decision Problems."
5. "A Bayesian Indifference Procedure."

C.

All together-forward & back & do-see-do.

WALKING ON EGGS

(*Rangoon*)

We disembark.
 The only man
 at the foot of the
 ramp is sharp;
 salutes.
 "Good morning, Sir!"
 he says.
 (It's 12:05 a.m.)

Fourteen carbines
 shoulder-slung
 aisle our walk-
 the muzzles straight are
 black against
 the piled clouds.
 Exile hour.

Inside the terminal
 more guns in
 corners & yet I see on two, three
 saffron faces
 smiles that make me
 think of yours
 before you turned your
 back in Tokyo—what?
 ten hours or twelve before—

Walking away without
 a wave or one look
 back. I think:
 I think I like
 the gunner
 at the foot of this
 foreign ramp
 better than you.

Alas, alas, mon cher
 chrysanthemum,
 The world, she screw.

I KNOW YOU'RE FUN DOROTHY, BUT I STILL BROOD NOW & THEN

Miss Parker, Let's get the tickle
more explicit.
Here is my wrist.

No confidence, no blade?
Well, test the
rope or provide

Graphic promise
of sal-
vation.

Or, Dear, torture out a
pup again, a cute
vulnerable, wobblekneed hope.

Direct it straight to
tackle Emotion at
her invitation.

Wrest *something*
out of mundanity
red, howling, new!

Wind snickers Dorothy's answer:
“You mew, Darling—
and you mewl.”

RUDYARD KIPLING STREAKS

—*To Martin Duberman*

Headmaster rough on Rudyard-o
he driv the Massa (kist) to
Mandalayzian mist.

The leading Kingly Light
doth undermine the
Knight.

And done reading good for good
in white duck office wear
today is understood.

Unburdened we race bare.

GENERAL JOHN REVIEWS FRIDAY THE THIRTEENTH

Damn it,
these days
the only poems I write
seem to be about
dead people.
But then
half of my friends are
dead, and
I don't like
to talk
about strangers.

GENERAL JOHN MEDITATES ON BEING LONELY

Absence makes
the heart grow
teeth.

DINNER FOR TWO

Butcher Man,
you said to boil
the croaker head 5 minutes
and my cat would
absolutely love it.

I guess I'm chickenlivered,
but when the cooking croaker's
eyes turned white
I nearly
puked.

But I went through with it!
My cat turned
his nose up
at the tenderness
and lack of blood.

(How many times
I should have done!)

THE CASTING ROOM

—For Ann & Arthur

I. (Miss Kopple)

She sliced
light, center
to right.

The fevers had
once sung for her,
he waits for them.

II. (Mr. Delicado)

No matter the
huge white
spaces

He knew
he was a poet
so

Had the printer
decorate with as-
terisks

Big
as
dollars.

III. (Mr. Arrow)

Watched himself
get heavy in the chest
& fat desire
diminish by half.

Watched himself back
against
the brick
wall.

It has been some months.
Pupils glint olive.
Face fine & thin
again.

IV. (Miss Anatomic)

For only
a slight
fee
could have
had a
Notary Public's
seal
on
her
refusal.

MME DeSADE'S BINGO PARLOR

*I, John Letsome, purges, bleeds & sweats 'em
& if after that they wants to die, then I John, letsome.*

—From an essay by John Parramore

If it had been a razor,
Dear, my hand and pen hastening on
to underline that kiss-off line
of yours
would have left me a
pointer finger poorer and
blood all over these pages.

Buffoon, ne?
All, all over
the ice.

The back of my head
striking against the bars.

Somebody saying
“Poor Baby.”

Such
is the victory.

The cosmic laughter
Har har hars.

V *From Toward Columbus*

—To Bob Barrows

Epigraph

I had now completed the main purpose of my journey, having visited the various places connected with the study of Columbus.

—Washington Irving

AKUREYRI AND SURTSEY

*The island thus mentioned by him (Columbus) as Thule
is generally supposed to have been Iceland...*

—Washington Irving

I.

“Normally” it would be evening
yet we set out
under a sun,
clouds in a layer
or a deep-dish saucer
over the fjord.
We slice between
two noble mountains
down our road
wind Southward.

On this Occasion,
the last for a long time,
lone bird over rockledge,
lone milk can by a mailpost.
This, I think still my own
home heart wishes.

David drives well
as he did Sunday.
This is his country
and he knows these
rock roads.
Eye gains two mountains,
a sign warns
“Blind Turn.”

Out in the valley
ahead, to the right
vaster mountains.
Peaks and snow and
light is different now.
And the stream manifests and
the cattlebridge arches.

We go the same routes
in a somewhat similar
manner.

Five of us maintain next morning,
Val, Steffany, Steppy, David,
and I with you in my thoughts.

If you were here you might know
some of my heart's
confusion—and fusion.

II.

They call it *The Fall of the Gods*
—with the sun right the water rainbows: so!
where the idols of the Icelanders were all
thrown in after the priests fled to
the far North of the island after the Althing
leadership took the Cross,
accepting the “Christian sin.”

And what Gods fell that day into icewater,
and what Gods rose, cold as snow out of
the roar and the waters' spin
where cries to the ear are drowned!

We lower our voices, give up our jesting.
They call it *The Fall of the Gods*.

III.

The only shoes he had were
dancing shoes
and he walked carefully on gravel.
Did Flood Houliland,
back there in west Canada.

IV.

Get-along on we do.
Ponies.
A white snow pony, wildest of eye
These are the vitals.
The clouds boiling.
David offers me a cigar.
Between rivers
a pool reflects the mountains.
Rocks
like great statues of Trolls
guard the passes
of the road.
There is an island in the lake; lake a
clear mirror. Mirror.
The quiet is total.
And this,
this is the heart.

V.

Leaving. Leaving again. Leaving the third time.
At such times we chatter to not let sentiment
trip us.
Solveig refers to "James Bond." Young Steppy
says "Jimmy Bond would be better. We can't
be so formal." (Thus we stay dry-eyed.)

I have gone out only to come into
a greater harmony than I had dreamed,
regardless of new confusions of the heart.

VI.

“Our Season, My Dear, is called vortex.”
“Our time is eruption.”
“I think of *The Fall of the Gods*.”

THANKSGIVING DAY MONTREAL

I. *Reprise on Waking*

I could do handstands
I'm so happy to be near you.

I'd hate to
...couldn't cope with
a broken arm
if the handstand botched.

But the dude I didn't want to
won
—15 rounder—
just last week with his left hand.

I want happily
to see you, week
from now:
even in *that* crowd.

II. *Breakfast*

To see how he
looks
at her

Touches her
...the recip-
rocity.

Among us
Anglo types only
Bill Williams

Could have
recorded it
just right.

III. *Study*

My
amber glass
left.

NOT AS A FOOLISH MAN

(Montreal October)

Thoughts run fast, back and back.
 Suddenly a vista, as wind
 beats black rain against this
 4th floor window.

Pace the floor, write Ragnar in
 Iceland, twelve months late.
 9 degrees centigrade the
 radio tells me after "Disco Duck" in French.

My loves and yearnings are so near
 parallel to early youth.
 But fifteen vigorous years have spoken.
 I cannot bear more repetition

Nor will inflict it save as *leitmotif*,
 consciously.
 But oh the Places I love now. And how I
 would return to you, to you

With the absolute same passions,
 the desires somewhat clearer,
 & the great hopes still, and still
 not as a foolish man.

Wet vista, dark and cold, these
 wet feet walk
 your streets
 with that odd heart maintained.

One of you (colder even than Montreal)
 I feel as a sudden lover to:
 old Reykjavik. Then, quick, hot
 Old San Juan and wild Tokyo.

Why,
why cling to the geography of love?
I do not know, Dear Friends—
or why I'll hang before I'll quit.

Nobody goes for pain or wants to
in his right mind
dish out hurt. (Forgive my tonal change.
Bear with me.)

That vista, though! Come with me
to try and try, wet feet, rain
coming parallel—not freezing yet
our luck—stepping our mud.

A MONDAY IN PORT AU PRINCE

4:00 a.m.

Chickens
dogs
chanting in from hills.

10:00 a.m.

Phillip, Fritz,
yellow-red
tab-tab.

10:45 a.m.

Yellow-red tab-tab
and we
arrive far out.

11:00 a.m.

Happy chicks
eat up coconut
after we drink milk.

11:15 a.m.

Outside bar
just ten stops
over there.

11:30 a.m.

Rum time! Big Mama
shakes toward
carnival.

Noon

Redlips Marie
& her body smile
from flowered red.

1:00 p.m.
Feed her rice
& rum while her
feet play my leg.

2:00 p.m.
Laughter stops,
quiet, fear.
A Ton-ton is here.

2:30 p.m.
Big Mama lays a
bottle on him free.

3:00 p.m.
The ships, the fiships
grace and gray sails
nets out.

3:30 p.m.
Flat ocean &
mountains darken
clucks hen
fat chicks
back at
coconut.
Rum gone, we're
near.

4:00 p.m.
Tab-tab home
yellow-red
Fritz, Phillip.

4:30 p.m.
Dusty, tired
happy, tight
3 sights!

5:00 p.m.
At the gate
Aggie waits his
smile a sphynxmelter.

6:00 p.m.
Shower busted
sweat black
rum, rum
cock-a-doodle
dogpack
oooo-oooo
sweet day.

GOODBYE ALWAYS SETTLING

(I.M. Florence Mary Cochran)

Mother, I “never”
dream in color
& you don’t need
taxis in Old San Juan

But there your were in
a spring-time yellow dress
hurrying along
along a block from
Ponce deLeon’s church
off to a tea or something
to be nice to people
—that’s for sure—
& smiling as
almost always.

I was standing
on the sidewalk
in the middle of a gossip
with my lover

& I said, “Just half a minute,”
& you said, “That’s
all right, Dear.
Finish your talk,
but I am in a real rush.
No problem; I’ll catch
this cab and see you
this evening.”

As Mr. Chaucer said,
“Yis.”

HOTEL CERVANTES, S.D.

Let's to the Prado and make the most of time
—Robert Browning

I.

Santo Domingo, a hot
 eleven o'clock start
 after breakfast
 for Boca Chica Beach—
 no *tro-tro*, no *tab-tab*, still
 essential *publica* wheels
 (two bits around town, two dollars
 for two to Boca Chica Playa).

In five colors “America The Beautiful”
 says the decal on the dash.
 Old Fernandez, driver, laughs.
 “Because I can't afford no radio,” he says.
 My friend, José, proud in directorship
 stirs to discuss his camera's virtues.
 The Dominican murders in New York
 dominate back seat talk.
 Why did the killers pick out
 Dominicans only? And
 the jammed, old Honda catapults the
 question, tears along the most
 beautiful ocean,
 palms and blue,
 palms and lapis blue: Everyday.
 Murders in New York are, too—
 but not singled-out Dominicans.

And then we're there
 and swim despite forgotten towels,
 and, salty, loll
 and swim again.

Back on the sand I take a smug delight
that the six-year-old on the donkey
refuses the New Jersey lawyer's money.
He was smiling, thanks, because he
felt like smiling, thanks. His
little brother, about three, is fun. The
bay is beautiful: friendly (barrier reef,
no sharks). And if it pleased
the lawyer, then his wife, and sister-in-law
to take the picture, it was their
pleasure and it makes him happy and when
you are happy you smile, mister.
He looks right past the handed dollars.
They are invisible.

II.

President Guzman was a complete charmer last night
on TV. I was afraid to come here last summer
at his inauguration time. The military, said the
press, might keep him out. (Marines have landed, yep!)
So now
I am a bit surprised by the on-screen military
presence flanking him.
This town seems a happy place to me
—so did Beirut eleven years ago.
For sure the cops are easy, friendly guys.
They were in Beirut, too.

The Pope, John Paul—John Paul The Two—
he kissed the ground here recently,
near Colon Square, I think.
I think: The Pope, and then
Columbus. Columb. Colon.
The outsider who accomplishes,
who voyages, and I do not mean mere travel,
is not immune to politic's brutality: That's fantasy.

The cowardly, the lazy
sometimes are.
And are the wise the old?
What makes you think so?
Are the sharp the young?
It is not so simple.
And what is a “fool’s errand?” I ask.
And what indeed is seeding
the future?
Oh, well.
We go.

III.

José’s amigo, also named José,
joins us back in the city,
climbs us up a side hill to a ruin.

“Her are the leg irons” (rusted).
A Catholic Baalbec, I think, silently
and recall the levelled temple of
Venus there; Mars and Jupiter still up.
Now in the ancient, ruined courtyard check
the olden-than-death underground.. Cistern here;
dungeon there. (O welded church-and-state.)
“They kept the mad ones here,” says José Two,
smiling and making goofy noises,
making his handsome face turn odd.

Columbus IS this city!
St. Christopher, indeed. What a paradox—
the traveller’s friend know that Colon also
knew his dungeons very well?

VI.

The sun will soon enough head down.
Goin 'home'—the two—Sir José First, Sir Ron
then stop to watch a chained
Iguana in a circle of people.
It is being yelled at by its captor.
The man is shouting nonstop at his captive.
The crowd, despite the hour, grows. We leave.
Somehow it all connects.

In Santo Domingo, hungry with twilight
we walk our mile or so,
sticky with sweat and sea salt,
to The Cervantes now, at suppertime.
Sancho
and What's-His-Name.

BASSETERRE

I.

Not to chronicle hours
the major lesson.

II.

"Good-good," Doc clips it.
Oh yes,
a little good is left.
"Please pass the spam."

III.

Don, Bumpy, LeRoys I & II
Tutt, Oinee, others on
some roads, and to unique
degrees.
The 13 children, and she preg-
nant again. & in the "outer
world" bad news of
Bhutto, Bakhtiar.

IV.

Alexander Hamilton. Lord
Nelson's Church, the manor
perched on the small mountain
(Nevis). Jo-Jo throwing
the big black pig into
the ferry's stowage.
Images. Trussings up. I
know how important *some*
bleedings are:
Greenland. Cariboo. Nevis.

Taste. Palate.
And what is education?
(Bakhtiar. Bhutto.
Where all the good men end?)
I wept and Cecil asked
“Did you know him?”
“I think so,” I said.

Oh yes, My Valentine,
too well.
Maybe you do too.
No clothes affordable.
13 babies.

*Something wants love and
something wants governing.
The sun is good, but
not quite wise enough.*

PORT AU PRINCE MORNING

Halfway to where we were
yesterday for rum
at Big Mama's
we *tab-tab* out.
A daytime bar, a lame bartender.
Lots of girls. Hell, and not yet noon.
She's Lydia, she says, and will
not go away, does not speak French
—a temporary from Santo Domingo—
and will not be ignored by me
as she seems to be by her
Creole sisters
We not El Papa kissed the ground
in her own town last week.
She grabs my
rosary.
I surge with generosity,
having said "no" so much.
"My wife's at the hotel,"
I say. "I cannot go with you
—would you like this?
memento!"

It half works. You will wear
it proud you say,
give it to your Mother
finally.
Observant Philipe, who's
been so silent, thanks me suddenly
in the other ear
for being kind to you.
Backpaddle, wash and watch.

It works a little while.
Then Lydia assures
my wife will not be wiser
nor ill served if we have sex.
I put the rosary around her
neck, get straight with God.
“It is from Italy.
He from Poland,” I mumble.
My rummy head thinks cosmically
—“or is he?”
That I have no bambinos
bothers her.
The room croons, “Yes, you do.”

VI
*Translations From
The Japanese*

—To W.S.M.

KING OF AUGUST

(Noritoshi Tachibana)

I'm King of August!
Wearing a green suit
I walk about
in the night of
Hiroshima,
King of August.

The night
overflows with
a black poison...
becomes bloody skin
itching to give
blue dreams of
dog-days victorious.
King of August.

When leaving Hiroshima
the King is to be naked.
Pull off
the green suit
throw it away
with bad dreams.

Pala, pala.
Downtown
of Daybreak.

(with Yozo Shibuya)

A RESURRECTION

(*Jyunzo Sawai*)

A bracken, a dragon-fly and a stream.
A world beyond death
is brought back.
Then, there, the great sky is full
of wonderful stories.

In a few moments
in the blue sky
a black cloud looms
and threatens to swallow the world,
sky, sea, and I.

(with *Nobuaki Sumomogi*)

SEARCH

(*Setsuke Masaoka*)

In myself
you look for
an unknown sea of flowers
unaware long wind
unseen forest of honey.

In myself
you look for
a known bear without a head
the eyes of a crippled dog, looking.

In myself
you look for
a picturebook I know
but you don't know
and the ebb-tide of life I know
but you do not know.

The sprouting dream you know
—but I forgot.

A variable star you know—but
I forgot.

You search, and
I do too, for
a giant bird,
also lost.

(with *Nobuaki Sumomogi*)

POEM

(*Setsuke Masaoka*)

Summer dead.
Suddenly, regretfully,
leaves
color;
fall begins.
Sunlight is weary;
it hesitates by
the magnificent forest.

Summer dead.
The wind increases,
living's transparency smiles
more faintly.

Summer dead.
Still,
out of disorder
somehow the elegance.

Deep autumn manifests.

(with *Nobuaki Sumomogi*)

MEETING

(*Jyunzo Sawai*)

Clouds, grasses, stones,
 girls, friends, fathers,
 destiny,
 god,
 and all the rest!
 If you
 will whisper again and again,
 a million times,
 "Meet, meet, meet..."
 I will not say anything.

(with Megumu Yamakawa)

THE TERMINAL

(*Uno Takashi*)

My watch has been ticking
 the rusted time only.
 But while it takes rest—laying down on the job,
 rusted time runs away
 inhumanly through the dry sunset.

One day
 the passenger on the final bus
 was the summer.

(with Nobuaki Sumomogi)

OF POETRY

(*Kimigo Nishiyama*)

I want to write a poem secretly,
which, nonetheless, no one will fail
to understand—
a cordial poem.

After I'm dead,
when somebody reads it,
it will be like a heart reading a heart.
That's how I wish it.

Sorrow must be secret.
But sometimes,
sometimes,
the secret is beautiful.

And sometimes the sorrow leaves the secret,
and the secret is still there, and beautiful,
more than it was.
I wish to write a poem like that.

(with Yozo Shibuya)

SAID HEART

(*Kimiyo Goto*)

Told I should be a sweet, tender girl
I grew to hope
to be a sweet, tender woman.

I tried to be a sweet, tender woman
wondering “must I never show anger,
always speak kindly?” And “Must I be

Loved as pink shells by waves
for never opposing waves?”
Ah, such heavy considerations!
Now I am married, desire to be
sweet, tender wife,
sweet, tender mother,
sweet, tender woman.

(with Megumu Yamakawa)

A POEM: YOU!

(*Matsato Shimizu*)

You!

You were restored
from dead memory
when the sun sank into your eyes
when the night began to expand
from the inside of your eyes.

Suddenly

all the lights of town died out,
all the windows of this town were broken.

Why?

Ah!

wreckage of glass, iron, concrete!

Angels of hell were there!

People walked the ruined town, the town itself
dripping a cool blood from its head
out open by shards of glass.

And in the blood

a tiny,
red flower bloomed
just like a poppy.

People

kept walking with red flowers
on their heads.

And you?

Soon you will have to celebrate
your own funeral—
off by yourself;

And make a floral tribute with the flowers
from the head, and
place that tribute on your own grave.

(That day,
the very day
the red flowers were on the people's heads,
was the morning when
John Coltrane died.)

(with *Nobuaki Sumomogi*)

NOMINA NUMINA

(*Isamu Tsuda*)

Season is destroyed
at the angular granite.
Winter gusts into the basin
that supports the blue sky.

Then a messenger on a motorcycle!
(Don't tell his name,
don't betray the divine
to mortals or devils.)

Winter wracks a curse.
Silver wind paralyzes earth.
Winter. Words frozen.
"Namely..."

(with Nobuaki Sumomogi)

A BIBLE

(Gyoyu Hasebe)

God came back
from a walk
to persecute me.

When I took my glasses off
God disappeared from my sight.
The Dangerous Fellow knew it quickly.

At the day's height
nobody could understand my words.
Nobody could see my smiling face.

That Guy created a human being
but it was not necessary that
I was also created.

So, He might teach and lead
but I don't thing that
I was took care of by Him.

Wat an arrogant Cat!
What a Bossy Bastard!
He ordered and plundered my foods.

Like a flash
bird and animal escaped my approach.
It cost me.

He ordered my books taken away.
Somebody hooked my letters and pictures.
It's bad as blindness!

I want to see the people
whom God didn't create.
I want to see the persons
who threw off the glasses He forced on.

Whenever That One goes out for a walk
I go opposite, to the fields to search.
But like clockwork He always comes back
to persecute me.

(with Nobuaki Sumomogi)

GHOST STORY

(Moroyuki Ito)

Dandelion Dandelion
Dan, de Lion!

A boy walked toward me,
stretching his hands.

In the field under sunshine,
a lion is waiting for a chance.

(with Nobuaki Sumomogi)

YELLOW CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

(Yoshiro Ueno)

Centrifugal expansion,
centripetal reduction.
Severe repetition of them.
The huge concentric circle;
in it, dynamic space.

Girl with blue glasses, blue tights
rushed out of a blue flash.
Went through the huge concentric circle, full speed
and disappeared suddenly
without making noise.
Deep blue space was left.

Centrifugal expansion,
centripetal reduction,
severe repetition of them—
the huge concentric circle.

(with Nobuaki Sumomogi)

THE SEA GROANED

(*Chiyoko Terayama*)

Clock becomes sea.

Starts to strike
becomes dry cosmos.

To begin with, the falling petals of cosmos.
And the violent keys split
to the second. Mechanical cut ear.

Sea motionless.
Time broken.

Again the
sea groaned
in the show-window.

(with *Nobuaki Sumomogi*)

THE SAND CLOCK

(*Naoko Ban*)

The surging air,
the falling light,
and ebb-tide echoes, echoes.

Rose scent hangs
to the white sail.
Summer hanging on is cruel.

The modern city?
Cymbals crash.
Explosions and hymns: 'Which is that?'

Clock shrinks.
Waltz dies.
Space spaces our time into cut.

(with *Nobuaki Sumomogi*)

Ronald H. Bayes is a native of Oregon who has made his home in North Carolina since 1968. He has travelled widely and lived for a time in both Japan and Iceland.

Ron Bayes received North Carolina's highest award for literature in 1989 and was one of three American poets at the Noto (Japan) invitational festival in 1988.

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